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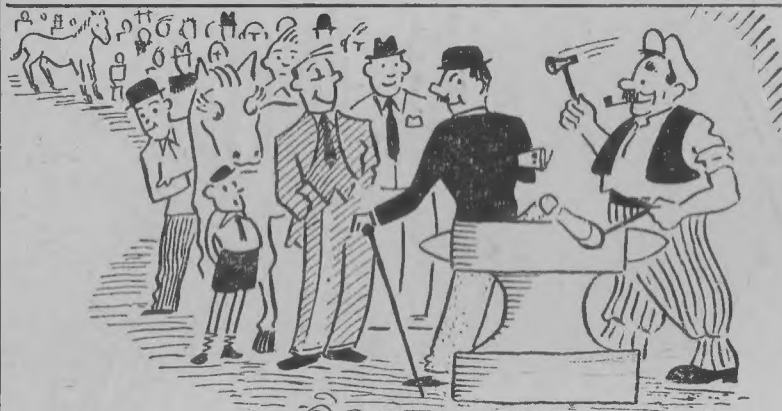
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As Mayor of Reading it gives me great pleasure to ask you to print a short foreword to the 1953 "Rattler."

All the people of Reading appreciate this effort of the Students' Union, as a result of which such large sums have been collected and given to our various local charities.

May your efforts this time be worthy of Coronation Year and may you have an outstanding success.

Frank Atjwis.

MAYOR OF READING.

To the Editor.

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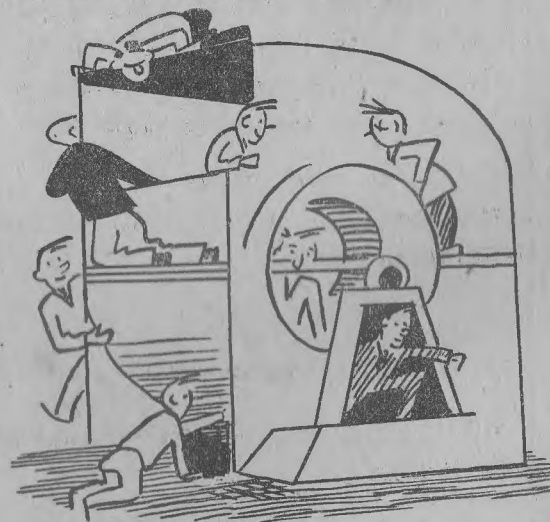
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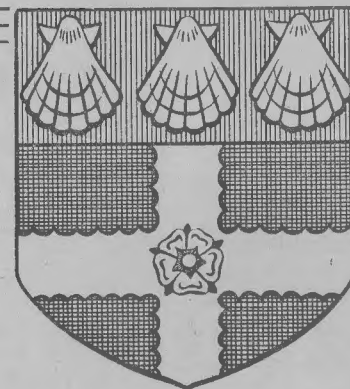
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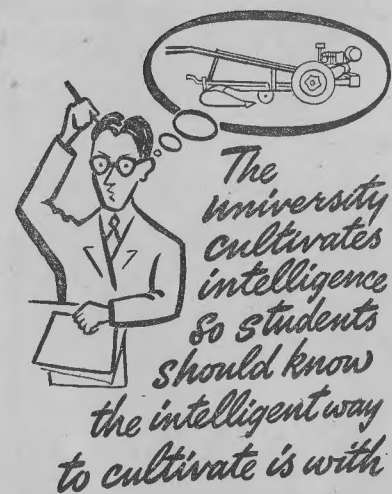
THE UNIVERSITY READING

*I*N recent years "Rattler" has been a good deal criticised, both inside and outside the University, on the ground that its standard of taste did no good to the reputation of the student world in general or of the Reading University Students' Union in particular. This year a determined attempt has been made to improve "Rattler" in this respect. It is too much to hope that the present number will commend itself to all readers; but at least it may be thought to have taken a considerable step towards a higher level of general acceptability.

However that may be "Rattler" and the Rag as a whole make their annual appeal on behalf of children's charities. Year by year the townspeople of Reading and the students of the University combine in this good cause, and the financial help—never more needed than now—which the Rag provides makes it possible for these organisations to carry on with work which would otherwise have to be abandoned. I hope that once again this year the worthiness of this object will meet with the response which on its own merits it clearly deserves.

J.F. Wolfenden.

Vice-Chancellor



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Editorial

THIS year, as everyone knows, is Coronation Year, and in the University there has been the feeling that this year's Rag should be a "rag to end all rags." I hope that this will not be the case—it will be a good Rag, but, I trust, not the last one.

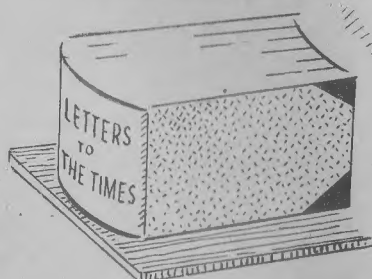
May I take this opportunity to say that the object of all the entertainments is to raise money. The Rag is our excuse for collecting for Charities—the Charities are not our excuse for ragging. Please give as generously as possible.

Perhaps in the past some of our money-making schemes have slightly misfired and if anything unfortunate should occur this year, just curse us, but don't let it make any difference to the amount of money you intended to give.

Yours sincerely,
 EDITOR.

Something To Write About . . .

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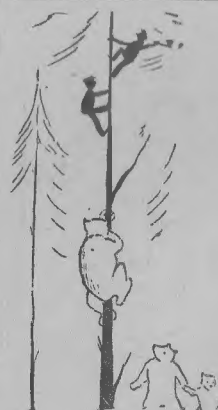
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THE SEARCH FOR FOOD . . .

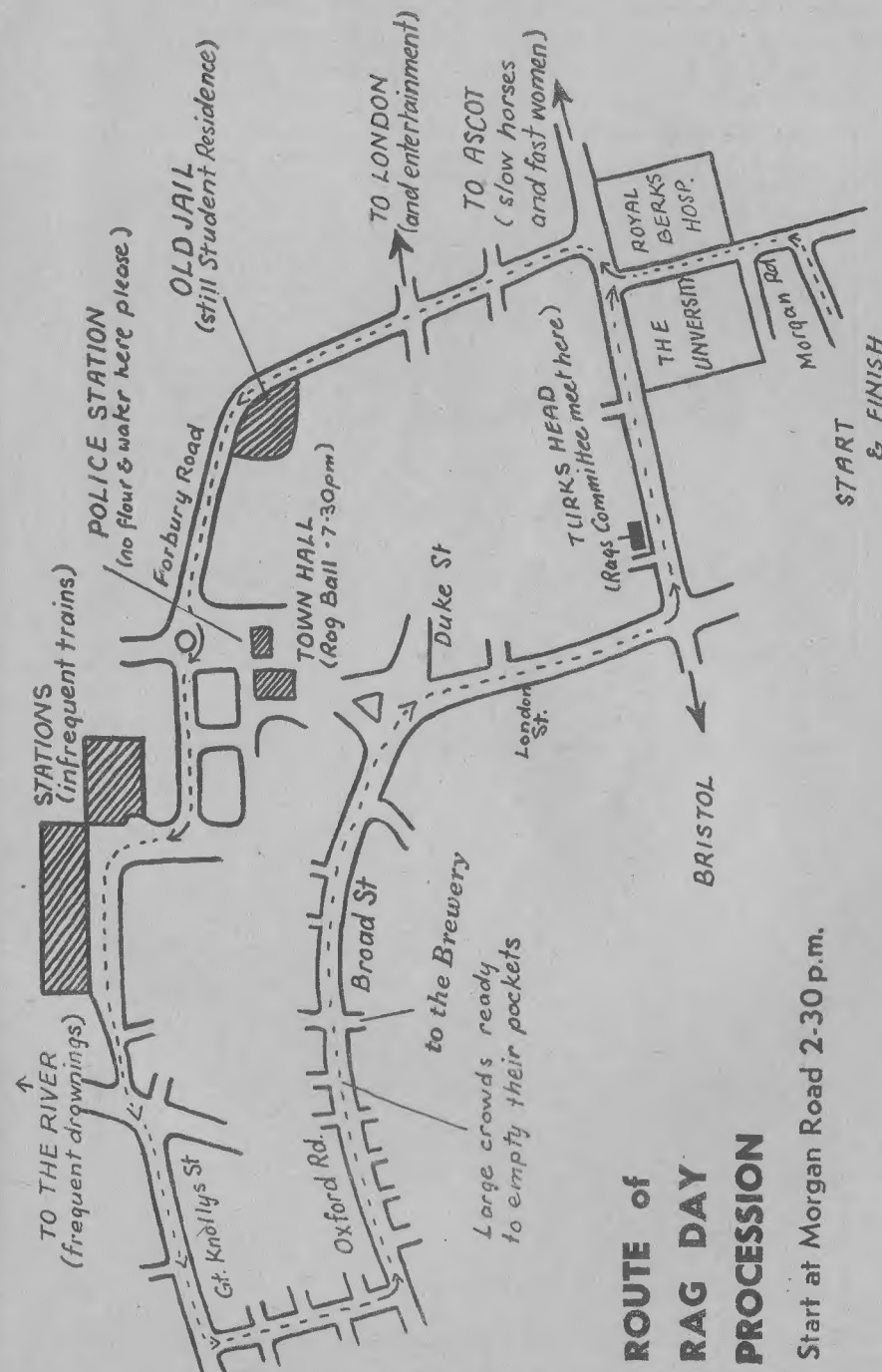
goes on all over the world, and of course Reading is no exception. But you have the one advantage here—you can get the best if only you know that the best place is the ASTORIA.

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ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 3.00 a.m. Brewery raided
- 4.00 a.m. Town Hall found in Broad Street
- 4.30 a.m. All cells in Police Station full
- 4.31 a.m. Large explosion at Police Station
- 4.32 a.m. Cells at Police Station empty
- 6.00 a.m. Rags Committee seen cleaning shop windows
- 6.30 a.m. Fire Brigade called to flooded "cellar" in Butts
- 7.00 a.m. RATTLER on sale
- 7.01 a.m. RATTLER banned
- 7.02 a.m. Rattler Editor commits suicide
- 7.30 a.m. Men seen replacing station roof
- 10.00 a.m. An Alderman to be auctioned in Market Place
- 10.05 a.m. No bid
- 10.30 a.m. Still no bid
- 10.50 a.m. Organised traffic jam in Broad Street
- 11.00 a.m. Student seen selling "RATTLER"
- 11.01 a.m. Thousands killed in the rush
- 12.00 Midday
- 2.30 p.m. Procession starts
- 2.31 p.m. All traffic stops
- 2.41 p.m. Chief Inspector covered in flour and water
- 2.42 p.m. Reading gaol re-opens
- 4.15 p.m. Traffic re-starts
- 7.30 p.m. Dancing to NAT TEMPLE
- 9.00 p.m. Miss READING appears at Rag Ball
- 9.01 p.m. Miss READING and CHAIRMAN OF RAGS disappear
- 9.30 p.m. Rag Draw made
- 9.31 p.m. Winner summonsed for not having TV licence
- 10.30 p.m. Fresh supply of beer arrives
- 10.31 p.m. Bar packed
- 11.45 p.m. RAG BALL ends
- 12.00 Midnight
- 12.10 a.m. Miss Reading's Mother chases Chairman of Rags out of town





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Ballad Dedicated to the Berkshire Constabulary

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(Keep yer theevin' 'ands orf.)

THIS is the tale of murder bad
Of Nifin And the wicked lad
A Cosh bandit of low degree
With Knuckledusters too you see.
Young Nifin was a dangerous youth
Who robbed as well as killed—for-
sooth.

Little gave him greater pleasure,
In fact he spent his hour of leisure
On plundering and murder bent.
A murderous youth of foul intent.
However he was not at ease
When with young ladies if you please
The lad would quake, he did not know
'Twas love astirring down below.
He would feel a strange sensation
Which ruined him for conversation.
So in the end he gave up talking,
Entertaining, even walking
With young ladies whom he met.
Not much fun for him—you bet.
So now he'd nothing else to do
And every day his boredom grew.
He'd cosh and rob with might and
main

And batter heads with cycle chain.
Spending every minute out
He became the town's worst tont.
Our Nifin was a wanted man,
Chased by cops in car and van.
One day while walking out at night
He saw a car with headlights bright
Which passed him leaving him dumb-
founded,

Crikey, how his heart-beats pounded.
Whoever he had seen inside
He would take her for his bride.
That car into a drive had turned,
O how that vision in him burned.
He ran down the road at speed
This time not bent on wicked deed,
And beating hard upon the door
He really made his knuckles sore,
Till the door was opened wide
And he was bade to go inside.
By now of course he was quite jumpy,
His throat it seemed all kind of lumpy.
He swallowed hard then spoke up
boldly.

The Butler interrupted coldly,
"We really have no time to waste,
With your business please make haste ;
The master is a busy man,
Tell him quickly if you can
Whatever you do wish to say,
Then hurry up and go away."

The master was a pleasant fellow,
Greeted him with a hearty bellow,
"Glad to meet you, son," he said,
And patted Nifin on the head.
"What can I do for you tonight ;
Good heavens, lad, don't take such
fright."

Young Nifin spoke, "Look 'ere, Guv,
Your daughter is the one I love . . .
I'd like to ask you for her hand."
"But, young man, you don't under-
stand,
My girl won't marry such as you,
She's posh-and quite good looking too."
The father answered hastily,
"Bad luck, but there it is you see."
Now Nifin's temper burst in flame,
He called the man a wicked name,
Reached his cosh from off his hip
And gave the Gent an awful clip.
The Butler hurried in aghast,
But Nifin dodged and scurried past.
"I'll take that girl away with me
And you won't stop me," shouted he.
He reached the daughter's bedroom
door

Which was on the second floor,
Swiftly flung it open wide,
Saw the girl was trying to hide.
Rushing up to her, he said :
"You and me are going to wed."
"Get away from me," she screamed.
"I'm quite nice really, ducks," he
beamed.

The girl began to cry and whine,
But the Butler dialled 999.
Police were soon inside the hall.
"We've got him now once and for all"
They cried and dashing up the stairs
Caught young Nifin unawares.
"Take your hands off her, me boy."
How the girl did jump for joy.
"I didn't mean it," Nifin bleated,
His cheeks by now quite overheated.
"Too late," they said, "to start repent-
ance,
You're going to serve a stiffish sen-
tence."

And that's the last we ever heard
Of Nifin And the wily bird.
'Tis time to end this little jingle
By the way, the girl stayed single
For a time, until one day
A handsome man did come her way.
She married him, lived with her Dad,
And that's the end of that—Egad.

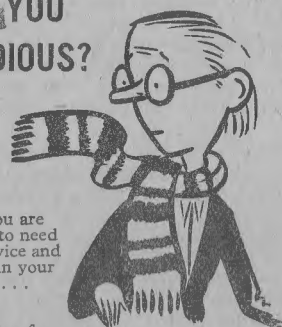


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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CROMPTON MANOR,
NR. BRANCHESTER,
DORSET.

Dear Sir,

Lord Fotheringay has instructed me to express to you his heartfelt regret that he will be unable to provide an article for your magazine—neither will he be able to offer any financial contribution to your Charity. This he intimated to me after dinner last night, saying that all his time and money, at the moment, was being spent on his 'little tots', as he puts it. The precise nature of these tots is not, of course, as his Lordship would have you believe. He did also instruct me to convey to you the ultimate destination which he at that time considered most suitable for the children for whom the money is to be raised.

Unfortunately I have not been able to approach him on the subject again since he is rather vexed over a letter which arrived this morning. It informed him that his estate was to be compulsorily purchased for conversion into a U.S. Air Force base, his house turned into a training ground for paratroops, since the ancestral hall boasts some of the finest chandeliers in the country—and in compensation he was to be offered employment in a Candy Floss and Coca-Cola stall in the Airmen's mess. No doubt you will appreciate that this news has caused his Lordship no little irritation, and when he was to be seen in the woodyard this morning vigorously hacking at his shins with a newly-sharpened felling axe, displaying such pathetic fervour on his unusually flushed face, even the least sensitive of the servants

could not fail to recognise that his Lordship was somehow not at peace with himself. Having spent some years in his Lordship's service I can testify to his generally unemotional disposition. Throughout this time I have found him a most courteous master, though since his last short period of depression I will admit I have been compelled to carry out my duties from a bath chair. This being due to a paralysis from the waist down, which resulted from a sudden spasm of annoyance on his Lordship's part when, thoughtlessly, he overturned the grand piano onto me as I knelt before him. Nevertheless apart from the five and a half years which I spent in hospital as a result of this accident I have served him continuously without undue incident.

However, he is indeed disturbed at the moment, there being apparent a notable characteristic of his Lordship when in the process of chiding himself—namely his seeming dissatisfaction with the general construction of the house and its contents. Even as I write I can hear the sounds of yet another marble staircase being systematically broken up and hurled into the front drive. I may say that in the normal course of events no direct passage exists between the staircase and the drive. Again, the fact that the housekeeper is finding difficulty in removing one of his Lordship's bedroom utensils from the head of the junior kitchen boy, is in itself tribute to the mood in which he received his breakfast.

Lord Fotheringay is usually a man of such gentle habits, a

Continued on page 15



"If We'd Known You Were Coming..."

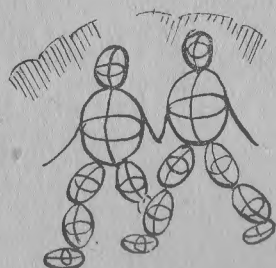
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pleasant soul, usually to be found deep in thought balanced on some windowsill pensively chewing the toes of his right foot, with an earnest concentration that we in the household have grown to appreciate. Yet now I am again disturbed as the body of the head gardener hurtles through the roof of the greenhouse, and in the distance the fire alarm rings in the East Wing of the house. His Lordship is indeed discontented.

However, it is time for me to return to my duties and to bring this letter to a close. I can hear

his Lordship coming along the corridor to my room calling me. Alas, poor man, he has trampled through the door of my room and is hurriedly coming towards me with the remains of the Cook's Austin Seven in his arms. Once again I...

This letter from Lord Fotheringay's late valet was forwarded to the Editor of "Rattler" by the house-keeper of Crompton Manor, and in view of the circumstances stated in the letter it was deemed worthy of publication.—ED.

Where Your Money Goes

Dr. Barnardo's Homes (Reading Branch)
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British Red Cross Society (Berkshire Branch)
Reading Branch N.S.P.C.C.
Reading Association for Welfare of the Blind (Children)
The National Children's Home
Save the Children Fund
Watlington House
Reading Dispensary Trust (Children)
Infantile Paralysis Fellowship
Church of England Children's Homes
Reading and District Refugee Committee
Reading and District Council of Social Services

What part did the U.S.A. play in the great war? It played the "Star Spangled Banner."

A member of Parliament cannot be arrested except for treason, felony, or breach of promise.



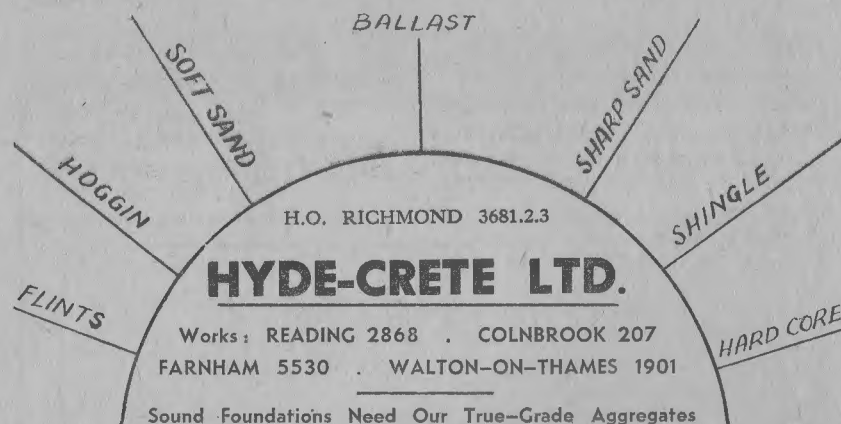
A note from you . . .

is all we need to 'get cracking' on your behalf. If it's a job in Building, Decorating or Shopfitting you require, then GO TO WEST'S, young man, and you're heading in the right direction for satisfaction.

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How's your Father ?

"Y' KNOW, mate, there comes a time when y' just can't take any more—you've been getting it for nigh on 20 bleeding years—so, what 'appens? You 'its back. Nar you've had it—up afore the beak you goes. "What," says 'e—"wife beating, barnd over for psychologist's report."

Av you ever been shut up in a room wiv a raving blooming lunatic—ar arter ar 'e questions y'. "'Ouse y' farder? Where's y' mudder? 'Ow old was y when you dun y little bruvver in? Cor, 'ell it is mate, 'ell it is.

Up afore the beak you goes again. "'Erb," he says, all kind like, "I've read y' report and 'ow would y'e like to go fer a nice rest; not prison, mind, but a sort of 'ospital where y' can get y' maladjustments put right?" Well, thinks I, nowheres can be as bad as going back to the missus, so I tells 'im I'm 'is man.

Nar there y' are, shut up n a 'ole blooming 'ouse full o' loonies. Some of 'em works there, but only difference as I could see was they wore white coats. And onto me they gets, ar after ar, week after bleeding week—"ouse y' farder? where's y' mudder? Then up comes the boss. "'Erb," says 'e, and 'im not arf my age. "Erb, my boy, what you needs is the hopportunity, yus, the hopportunity to be nice to the ladies, and I'm going to give you the chance wiv an Editor friend o' mine, nar off you goes and be a good boy." So, off I goes.

And oo am I? Mrs. blooming Munro of the *Ladies' Weekly*. An' what does I do? I answers letters.

Well, I does me best. Picks up the first letter—"I am nearly 17 and my boy friend is 56—my parents object. Dear Mrs. Munro, what shall I do?" So I writes back: "Send me 'is address and I'll go round and push 'is teef darn is froat, the dirty old man."

"That's no good," says the Editor, "'ere, try this—this is easier." So I reads: "I am about to be married, what sort of a speech shall I make at the reception?" So I writes and tells 'im not to be a damn fool and get art while the going was good.

"Nar," says the Editor, "'it ain't practical; try an' be more practical. 'ere, av a go at this."

"My parents are rich, but my fiance's parents are very poor. Will this make any difference in our married life?" Nar, obviously what's wanted is for the boy to get 'imself some cash, but that ain't practical. An' then the great idea comes and off I goes.

Darn to this girl's 'ouse—up the drainpipe—gets the jools what was in the old lady's dressing table, darn the stairs, safe in the usual place, 'as it open in two ticks—cash in me pockets, wads an' wads of it. 'elp, oose that, the old man of the 'ouse as got me—so I dots 'im one and off I goes through the winder straight into a copper's arms. I asks y', ain't love wunnerful?

Up afore the beak I goes. "What," 'e says, "'ouse breaking an' assault. Barnd over for psychologist's report." Cor lumme, mister—

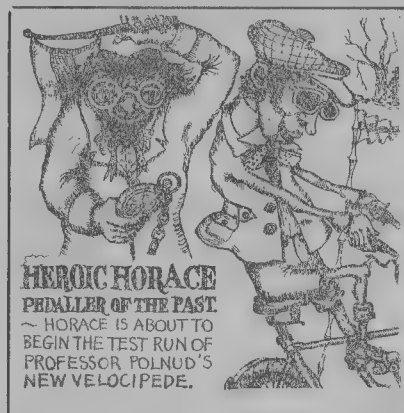
Are y' farder?

INTRODUCTION

A GREAT DEAL has been said in recent months upon the evil influence of the strip cartoon on the minds of the younger members of our community. I therefore feel that it is my duty to take this opportunity to swill out the well, this pig bin, of contemporary literary vice and immorality, and by dint of good example set writers, artists and publishers upon the road to reform and a return to the high standards that made our grandfathers what they were—pillars of morality and virtue.

— (Sgd.) CHATERLY, Ed.

No. 2



No. 4



No. 1



No. 3



No. 5



No. 6



No. 8



No. 10



No. 7



No. 9



What will
become of them?
Place Your Order for
Next Doomsday's
FLUTTERBY
the Magazine for the
Sons and Daughters
of Gentlefolk.

How It All Started

WHILE thousands enjoy Rag Day each year, few know what they are celebrating. The whole thing started many moons ago, in the days when Rupert, the demon mayor, held the Town in trembling.

Rupert the Terrible, Mayor of Reading, the man who strangled little girls with his chain of office, and cut the townspeople's biscuit ration down to rolb, a week each.

Yes, they were frightening days in the Town's history. Few inhabitants escaped the tyrant's cruelty. Indeed, many of Reading's streets owe their names to his acts of savagery. Friar Street, where an unfortunate friar was roasted alive for selling balsam after hours. Gun Street, sole memorial to the fifteen students massacred for playing hopscotch on the Aths Ground on a Sunday. (The Butts, of course, are those of the guns used.) Cross Street marks where a publican was crucified before his house for watering the beer. Broad Street used to be Blood Street, and so on.

Brave (and helpless) were the five ladies of the Mayoral concubine—their memory too is perpetuated, in the Town's crest. Like many of his genus, Rupert was a superstitious man; he insisting on incorporating in the foundations of the Market Square conveniences a live undergraduate, to ward off evil spirits.

When, one Wednesday, a sign was erected over a small shop in Duke Street, bearing the legend "YADGAR—GADOINGG MAKER," few saw cause for jubilation. Even old Yadgar himself, newly arrived from his native Turkey, could not forsee what the Fates held in store for him.

Rupert, on one of his frequent inspections of the Town, soon spotted the Turk's puce and beige sign, and signalling to one of his men to break the man's window, he yelled through, "Hey, you—make me a gadoingg and bring it to the Town Hall by two o'clock!"

Clive tried to shoot himself, but the pistol failed. To give him another chance his parents sent him to India.

"But, Master . . .," the old man blurted out.

"Enough! Two o'clock or it will be the worse for you!" snarled Rupert, lashing Yadgar with his whip, through the fractured window.

At one forty-five that afternoon, a be-fezzed figure stole out into the deserted street, bearing under his arm an odd-shaped parcel—a heavy parcel, to judge by his slow, uneven pace.

Arriving at the Town Hall, he was de-fezzed in no uncertain manner by a blow from the long staff of one of the Mayor's bodyguard.

"His Worship is in the Parlour," hissed the figure, "and you'd better have something good, he's in a vile temper."

Yadgar crawled into the Parlour backwards, on all fours, to take no chances of offending the Mayor, who sat upon a purple throne. Rupert motioned him to undo the parcel, which he swiftly did, to reveal a polished hickory stick, some thirty inches long, one end of which was sunk into a large lead ball.

"So this is a gadoingg!" he roared. "What's it for?"

Yadgar took hold of the hickory stick in both hands, held it above his head, and brought the lead ball down with all his might on the Mayor's head.

And as it split his skull in two it went "GA-DOINGG."

As soon as the news of the Mayor's unexpected demise was known the Town went mad, preserving its sanity long enough to elect the Turk, Mayor in Rupert's stead.

The students planned a terrific celebration to be held each year to commemorate the event, and proposed that it be called YADGAR after their deliverer. However, it turned out that this was also the name of a patent medicine, and could not be used, so they simply turned the word back to front to spell RAG DAY.

Henry VIII was the world's greatest widower, and in later years he developed a limp through having an abness on his knee.

★ ★ RATTLERGRAM ★ ★

Solve the 9 clues, putting the answers in the columns provided. All the answers are 4 letter words. If you complete the puzzle correctly you will see, in the first two columns how to boil a Chinaman, and if you add Y to the last column, the result will be a funny story.

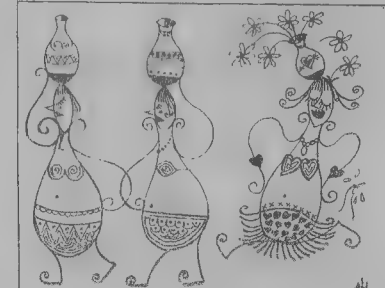
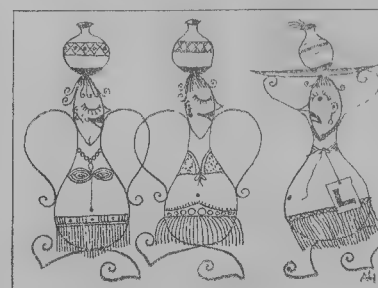
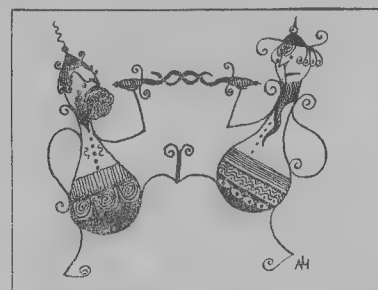
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Clues

- One is twice as much as this.
- No-one goes through this without getting the pip.
- What not to say if you like a lot.
- Logically, the drill-sergeant's 'shun' should be spelt thus,
- Suggest exclusiveness.
- Gains possession by prompt verbal claim.
- Be sick without the Victory sign.
- Character in 'Othello'.
- Now BR(E).

Answer on page 31

The Editor cannot enter into any correspondence with competitors as the Editor cannot write.—Q.E.D.



"On Making a Film"

CONSTABLE POLICEMAN scratched his head. This to be sure was a thing he had done frequently these last days, but nevertheless, he did it again. "Them furrin crooks, you can't never tell what they'm going to do next. First it's landing crates from that there dratted yacht, and goings on on the beach, an now this. What be a man, and a police constable with all the respons'b'l'ty o' the Law behin' him, to make o' this yer?" He ruminated and disturbing once more the curls that escaped his back-tilted helmet, and fingering lovingly the handcuffs that were by now probably wearing a hole in his pocket.

For Fred, otherwise Constable Policeman, the police force of Alderbridge, was frankly puzzled by a sudden invasion of "furriners"; men in flashy suits, some even with neatly trimmed beards accompanied by a flock of such hussies that Mrs. Policeman was roused sufficiently to "be at" her Fred half the night about them. But not satisfied with looking suspicious, they had caused Fred further anxiety by behaving most oddly.

They had come in a yacht of formidable appearance; so expensive a yacht had never appeared off this little known part of the Cornish coast, and they had been met by men in cars and lorries which had been driven down to the beach and were loaded late at night with large cases. "Lor," Constable Policeman had said, "smugglin'! this yer means promotin' for you my lad!" But he had hesitated to make an arrest for the boxes had stayed in Alderbridge.

But now! He was hiding behind a clump of bushes near the beach on which the present cause of his cerebral agitation was taking place. One of

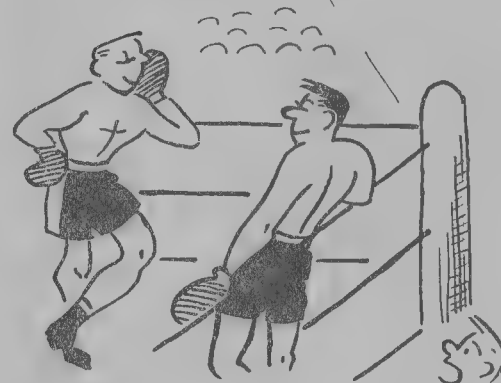
the "real hussies" that had aroused his Missus was seated in next to nothing (and worse than nothing according to Mrs. P.) on a rock, smoking—a thing unheard of in Alderbridge—and one of the suspicious characters was coming along towards her, turning round every moment as if fearful of being observed (a bad sign Fred thought) and carrying a box half hidden under the tattered jacket he seemed to have exchanged for the more usual impeccable dress of "they gangsters."

When the man reached the girl, Constable Fred straightened his tunic and drew his truncheon, for the man was pouring a pile of glittering jewellery into the girl's lap. Fred was rising from behind his bushes when there was a shot and the man fell forward and the girl screamed.

Forgetting the majesty of the Force, Fred ran forward. Just as he bent over the prostrate figure, it came to life and shouted at him, "You! . . . fool, what in . . . do you think you're doing?" Of a sudden the beach was crowded with all of "them London thugs" gesticulating, shouting and behaving generally like . . . like what? Like film actors, thought Fred, and so it seemed they were. Explanations were given by a portly, low-voiced gentleman with a cigar. The Law retired appeased and was later seen in the "Duke" telling all that "They's but a gang o' they film stars doin' a film on smugglin'."

The fat man chuckled. "That was a good idea of yours, Jimmy. Fooled that cop like I've never seen one fooled before! We've got all the stuff safe and the jewels will be over in France tomorrow. And 'e 'ad 'em under 'is own blinking nose!"

SPEED THE SCRAP!



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What do the ruins of Ancient Egypt really prove?

Probably, among other things, that Ancient Egyptian wives couldn't back chariots!

Evidence is something evil that they only have in police courts.

A by-law is a law the police are not keen on enforcing.

THE WENCESLAS FILE

ON the 26th inst. the Chief Executive was making an exploratory reconnaissance in the field under wintry conditions with good visibility but considerable icing-up when a unit of lower income bracket personnel entered his field of vision unauthorisedly supplementing his seasonal fuel allocation. A request for information from his P.A. as to the identity of the agricultural worker elicited the information that he, the agricultural worker, was normally resident three statutory miles (approx) from the point of reference at the foot of rising ground in close proximity to the clearly defined boundary of the nationalized timber plantation in the immediate neighbourhood of a water supply distribution point scheduled as a National Monument under the Act (q.v. "St. Agnes" Fountain). The C.E. putting in a formal request for a supplementary allowance of meat, imported alcoholic beverages and soft-wood, said, that they, the C.E. and his P.A., would personally supervise his, the agricultural worker's, food-intake after having effected the transfer of the aforesaid rations. The C.E. and his P.A. thereupon proceeded in company through a wind of exceptional velocity and sub-normal temperature conditions.

The P.A. drew the attention of the C.E. to the worsening of nocturnal visibility and the increased wind-

velocity. He said that owing to a constitutional cardiac condition of unknown origin he was not in a position to proceed further. The C.E. instructed his P.A. to pin-point the soil disturbance caused by his, the C.E.'s feet, and to unhesitatingly adapt them to his own means of progress: in which case the Personnel Assistant would become aware that his circulatory deficiency rendered him less susceptible to climatic disturbance.

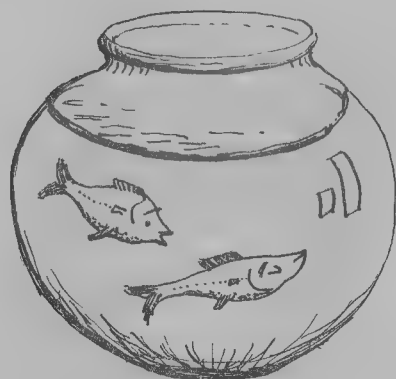
The Personnel Assistant in accordance with instructions placed his feet in conformity with the impressions retained by the snow: the actual sub-soil proved to be thermostatically controlled by direct recent contact with the canonised C.E.

In view of the above the attention of all males (C. of E.) in the higher income groups and/or of established executive grade at departmental level is drawn to the fact that a reasonable degree of certainty would seem to attach to the proposition that reciprocal advantages are likely to accrue to those taking a practical interest in the amelioration of social conditions pertaining to lower grade manual employment.

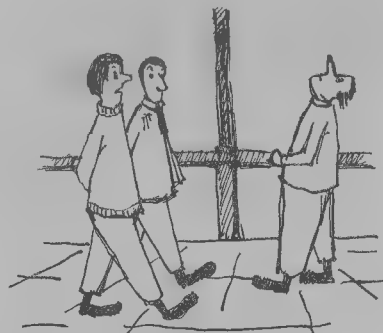
(sgd.) O. LANCASTER.

Industrial Relations Attache's
Office,

H.M. Embassy, Prague.



Are you sure there's no one else Doris?



Here's George! Back from Rome!—spent days examining Michael Angelo's ceiling in the sistine chapel.

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(EST. 1875)

READING



Dieu et mon droit

"GEORGE, go and kill that dragon."
"It'll keep till tomorrow. Pass the coffee, please."

"No, it won't. You've got to kill it today. The neighbours are talking."

"Oh, all right," said George.

"And don't forget to put on your thick mail vest, you know how these cold mornings affect your chest. And when you come back leave your sword in the backyard. I had enough trouble getting the dragon's blood off the carpet last time."

"All right," said George.

So George got into his second-best armour—he'd pawned his Sunday-best a week before—and went. He didn't really feel up to killing dragons that morning, the Round Table had had quite a party the previous night and now he realised that his wife had been using his chain socks as a panscrub again. "Oh, dear," he said, "who'd be a saint."

Eventually he came to a cave on the hillside all surrounded by forests. He gave a sharp "Yoicks! Tally Ho!" and out came the dragon. George made threatening gestures.

"Can't fight you today, old man," said the dragon. "Wednesday is early closing for dragons and you wouldn't like to get me into trouble with my Union, would you?"

At that, George, who, as you will remember, wasn't feeling in the mood anyway, sighed and said, "Yes, but I can't go back and tell them that. It's not the thing to do."

"Well, come in and have a cupper and we'll talk about it," said the dragon.

So they went into the cave, which was very comfortable—central heating and all—and were served with tea by a bevy of beautiful maidens. George's

eyes goggled a bit, they really were smashers, he hadn't seen anything like that since the day he was training on the battle course and had had to save a damsel from an ogre.

"Where do they come from?" he asked.

"Oh, I get one every year, you know," replied the dragon. "The people down in the village think I eat them, but they're so much nicer alive. The last time I ate one, about three hundred years ago, I had the most dreadful indigestion and I vowed I'd never touch girl again and I haven't. But they still bring one up every year and tie her to the stake outside the cave."

"Oh," said George.

"Cigar?" said the dragon. When George took one, the dragon lit it by carefully breathing on the end.

"Now, about our little problem," continued the dragon as he settled himself in his armchair. "I can't fight you, and you can't go back without fighting me."

"And I said I'd be back for lunch," added George.

"Quite so," said the dragon. "This is what I suggest. Give up the whole idea and stay with me. I'm getting fed up with nothing but girls about."

"Oh, please do," said several of the beautiful maidens who had overheard all this.

George drew on his cigar, looked round the comfortable cave, eyed the maidens, and thought—no more heavy armour, no more nagging about dragons before lunch, no more nasty remarks like "You need a new helmet," and said, "I'll do it."

"Oh, goody," said the maidens, "your chain socks will make wonderful panscrubs."

THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR came towards me in her normal menacing manner, glared, and in a low, sinister hiss, said: "Didn't you hear me knocking on the wall last night?"

"That's quite all right," I replied nicely, "we were making a noise ourselves."

"MY NAME'S Johnson-Johnson, the Sussex Johnson's, sir. I would like to marry your daughter."

"Marry my daughter, eh? Needs thinking about—do you drink or smoke?"

"Thank you, sir, I don't mind if I do."

"THAT'S MY BABY!"

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sees a sample of his work
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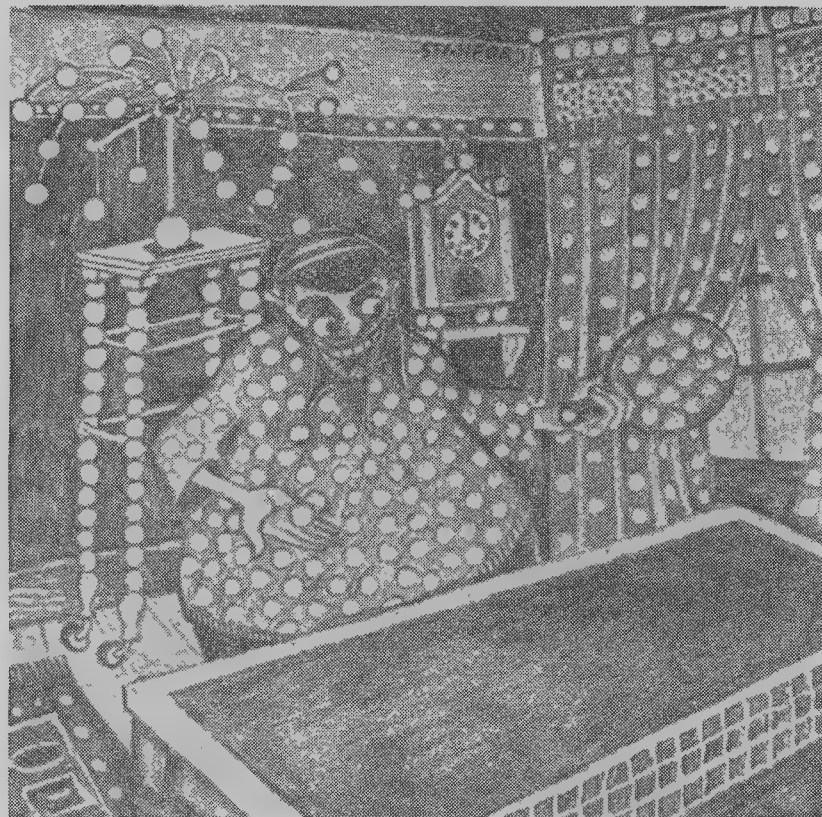
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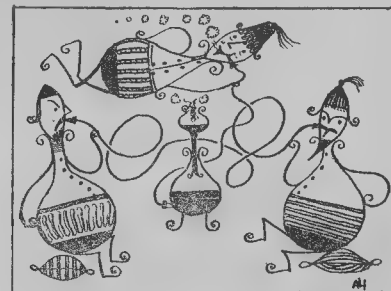
ALL'S FAIR . . .

It WAS cold and dark, damp and drear outside. Inside it was almost oppressively hot, or so thought the young woman hanging from the leather strap which held her arms so agonisingly above her head.

"Give me the money," said the low, sadistic voice of the leering face in front of her. She trembled, but said nothing. "Give it to me or else it will be just too bad for you. You know what will happen to you, don't you?"

She nodded her head, whimpered, but said nothing.

"Very well, you obstinate fool," and he raised his hand. "No, No," she screamed. "Don't, please; don't do that. I can't give you the money. I haven't got it."



The man glared. "That's just too bad for you," he roared.

His hand went above his head. The girl flinched, there was a buzzing in her ears, but suddenly she stopped shaking. There was no other way out and she knew it.

So she got off and walked the rest of the way.

Over 75 years ago

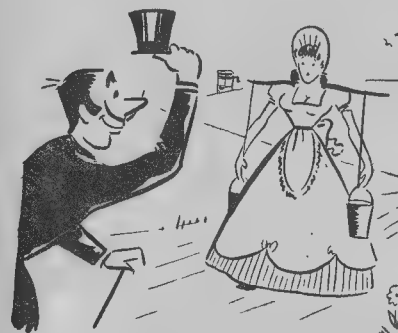


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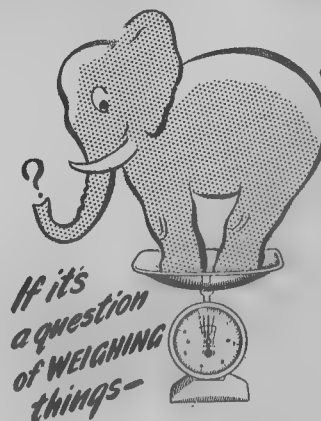


"Where Are You Going

my pretty maid?", "Milking, Sir," she said. "Some of the clean, safe milk hygienically treated and bottled for sale by . . ."

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REDINGITIS

According to the Oxford (Reading Suburb) British Dictionary, 1892.
—Ed.

Redingitis (pronounced Death). — A chronic complaint—manifest in numerous forms—to live in Reading—to be subject to the *whiff* of Beer and Biscuits—to be unable to get home from London after 1 a.m.—to fish in stagnant canals—to sit in cinemas with sinking floors—to suffer from boroughocracy.

Boroughocracy. — Another equally chronic complaint—also found in numerous forms—to have too many police cars—to have too vigilant a Watch Committee—to have early-closing pubs—to live under Mount Gasometer—to be enclosed by traffic lights and zebra crossings—to die of Stifflement.

Stifflement (ancient Redingensian word)—to die with your boots on outside the Granby—to be arrested for sun-bathing on Sundays in Palmer Park—to be held as an alien when found loitering with (or without) intent in Sonning or Wokingham—to desire nothing more than to be cremated and your ashes thrown over Reading Bridge—to welter in garbage in the Market Place.

Garbage (pronounced *Psshewthff*)—refuse, e.g., the Town Hall—decay, e.g., the final product of a decaying body (the Watch Committee)—gives off readmosphere.

Readmosphere (again pronounced (*Pss-----ff*))—a smog—regarded by the town's publicity department as invigorating air—by the town's population as psshewthff—the reason for moving to Tilehurst.

Tilehurst (not mentioned in 1892 edition).

Tilehurst (1952 ed.)—an excuse of the housing committee—an area with no bus stops—air as fresh as a baby's—absence of smog and beery whiffs (until the Americans find a way of flogging us our prevailing Westerly wind).

Americans (pronounced Nationalised Pawnbrokers)—odd people who while visiting Great Britain steer well clear of Broad Street.

Broad Street—only so in the early hours of the morning—a mistake—an excuse for zebra crossings and policemen.

Policemen (pronounced policemen)—long, black, removers of posters—only allowed to reproduce within their species, and within built-up areas.

Built-up Areas—usually inhabited—consist of muddy tracks with large potholes (LONdon road), a police station (no licensing hours) and a Post Office.

Post Office (pronounced Scive)—an institution of doubtful characters—a public service (1892 Ed.)—a public nuisance (1952 Ed.).

Post Office (verb)—to expand production during the Festive Season for the benefit of old lags and students.

Old Lags (pronounced timedoers)—blokes that have a reason for working at the Post Office.

Students (pronounced timewasters)—blokes that work the Post Office for a cheap thrill on the back of a postcard—necessary evils—parasites on local education committees of local councils.

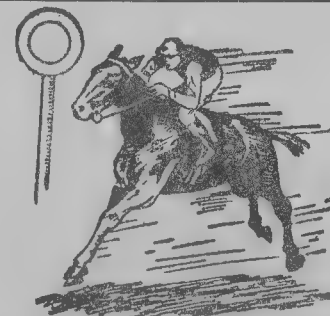
Local Councils (pronounced commissariats)—peculiar bodies—said to be the elected (usually fiddled) representatives of the town's population—personify the expression 'talk of the Town'—the cause of high rates—the excuse for official ceremonies and banquets—run or prohibit (usually prohibit) the local activities.

Local Activities (pronounced fun after dark)—impossible in Reading due to, size of police force, absence of dry, sheltered seats, too many street lamps in the wrong places (near bushes, etc.).

Wrong Places (pronounced READING)—enough said.

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DID YOU KNOW about the cannibals who knelt down and said: "For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful," and then ate the missionary.

—about the notice in the grocery store which asked customers not to get too close to the bacon-slicer as they were getting behind with their orders.

—about the Pilgrim Fathers who went to America to sow their Quaker oats.

—about the brilliant young lady pianist who would have been grand if she hadn't been so upright.

Queen Anne was the last of the Stuart kings for several reasons.

Answer to Rattlegram

H A L F
O C T U
W H E N
T I O N
O N L Y
B A G S
O M I T
I A G O
L N E R

When Drake was asked why he didn't go to fight the Armada, he replied that his bowels were more important.

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Report from Social Research Department

DUE to the increase in the size of ladies' hats in cinemas a *Rattler* reporter has been engaged on research, trying to find how to deal with this menace, as menace it is, for those sitting behind. These investigations were, unfortunately, not completed by publishing day, but we have decided to put before the public the discoveries to date in the hope that it might enable them to find their own method of combat.

Report to date:

The first and most obvious method is to knock the hat off. This must of course be done accidentally and it is necessary to leave the seat so that the knock-off can be done on the return. There are several legitimate reasons for leaving your seat—ices, cigarettes, etc., and of course, etc., and on your return the hat is knocked neatly off to your partner, who is kneeling on the floor, who then throws it well into the rows behind. If there is no row behind it is essential that the hat-bearer should leave immediately even at the expense of buying another ticket. This very rarely arises as the number of people in the back seats who are conscious of anything in front of them is virtually nil.

This hat-knocking method proves successful in five out of seven times. The other two-fifths pin their hats on. Beware—your opponent is armed with a superior weapon.

The best way now is to light a cigarette and burn a hole through the

hat and apply your eye to this. This works well with extra large hats, but with the medium size the view is often obscured by loose strands of hair and any animal life therein—an improvement, I might add, to "Tarzan" or any wild-life film—but is not suited for strong emotionalism.

There is only one way of dealing with the medium large pinned hat. Take a pair of scissors, neatly run round the crown of the hat and lift off. I have tried this method, but it has the disadvantage of not only removing the hat, but also the hair of the wearer, leaving a shiny and dazzling white pate which is even worse than the original hat.

There are two ways of combating the shiny head. Sunglasses are rather effective but are inclined to spoil the contrast of light and dark upon the screen. Alternately a pot of black paint and a brush to apply it to the head in front is a good method, but it is difficult to apply the paint without the hatless, hairless one becoming conscious of some annoyance and calling for the manager. When the manager comes, smile and shake his hand and tell him that —

Unfortunately the report ends there, but we earnestly hope that some knowledge of our reporter's experiences will help you in the future.

All contributions to our reporters' "bail and fine fund" will be gratefully received. Collection boxes will be in the town on Saturday.—Thank you.

Press Comments on Rattler

We would like to make a collection of these excellent papers.

Reading Wastepaper Co.

This is a great literary work—a must for everyone.

Editor, Rattler 1953.

It is not as good as last year's.

Editor, Rattler 1952.

Has many good uses.

Sanitary Inspector.

I cannot do any worse than this.

Editor, Rattler 1954.

Send us every copy available.

Moral Enlightenment Soc.

This is the last word.

Editor's girl friend.

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The Song of the Mad Committeeman

IT'S a wonderful thing a committee!
 So wordy and woolly and witty.
 May be big, may be small,
 May not function at all
 (If it does it is rather a pity!)
 With a shake in her shoe and a cold in
 her head
 The Sec. says the minutes-all-taken-as-
 read
 Were left in the train between Reading
 and Slough.
 She's sorry, but really, what can she do
 now?
 With a song in his heart, and a frown
 on his face,
 With his eyes firmly fixed on an atom
 in space
 The Chairman declares that if that be
 the case

Will she kindly read out the agenda?
 It's a wonderful thing an agenda!
 A joy to receiver and sender.
 When you've filled in the minutes,
 B.A., A.O.B.,
 You haven't got room for more items
 than three,
 When they're done with you move an
 adjournment for tea.
 A motion without a contender!
 On the chair in the corner, brisk, eager
 and thin,
 Is the worthy young member-you-
 have-to-put-in.
 With her spectacles bouncing, her eye-
 brows severe,
 She declares your suggestion a vulgar
 idea.
 It's a wonderful thing, a committee
 So wordy and woolly and witty.

Acknowledgments

THE COMMITTEE would like to express their sincere thanks to:

- Messrs. McMillan Graham & Co. Ltd., Manchester, for their patience and invaluable assistance.
- Osbert Lancaster and *Time and Tide* for permission to print the Wenceslas File.
- All the Advertisers who, by their support, have made RATTLER possible.
- All other firms, organisations, and individuals who have helped in any way whatsoever.
- All contributors to RATTLER.

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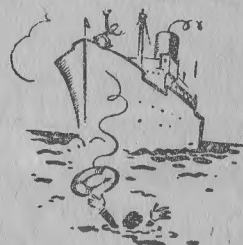
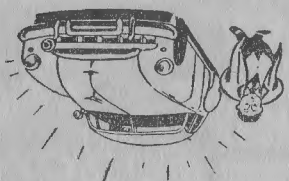
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We'll Save You . . .

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cherished possessions, you'll
find, are perfectly safe in our
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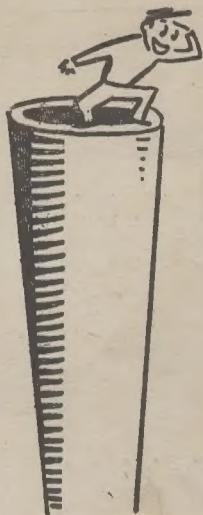
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